

P- Kohn, Howard

# NEWS & OI

P- Newman, Barbara  
CIA 4 Israel (uranium)

~~SECRET~~ NO MEX

CIA 103 Suchett, Carl

By Howard Johnson, Lyndon

CIA 101 Helms, Richard

P- Szulc, Tad

(orig under, Kohn)

## How Isra

# got the

# nuclear bomb

**I**N 1965, DURING A ROUTINE INVENTORY, U.S. government inspectors discovered that a substantial amount of enriched uranium... enough for several atomic bombs... was missing from a Pennsylvania nuclear plant. Three years later on a road in France, an armed gang overpowered the driver of a truck and drove away with a cargo of uranium. Another nuclear shipment was hijacked in England a short time later.

The three nations investigated these seemingly unrelated incidents and found that they were part of a carefully plotted stratagem. But for the next decade the findings were suppressed. The U.S. investigation was classified top secret and President Lyndon Johnson allegedly ordered the files locked away.

According to two confidential U.S. government sources, the victimized governments were afraid of a political fallout, both for themselves and for the Israeli government. All three operations were the work of Israeli

intelligence agents, the sources told ROLLING STONE, and the same agents subsequently carried out two more uranium hijackings with the unlikely cooperation of the French and West German governments.

The stolen material was used to give Israel a last-resort military alternative in the Mideast. By the CIA's estimate, Israeli scientists have fashioned as many as fifteen powerful nuclear bombs. Although Israel has not openly tested the bombs and has kept its nuclear program shrouded in mystery, it is widely regarded in the international intelligence community as the world's seventh nuclear power, joining the U.S., the Soviet Union, England, France, China and India among the atomic elite.

Both of ROLLING STONE's major sources are experts in Mideast affairs; one is a highly valued Pentagon official, the other a former National Security Agency official. Their information was corroborated, in part, by a former CIA official.